

SPEECH TO BE DELIVERED BY THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC
WELFARE AT THE MEETING OF PHYSICIANS LIVING IN AND AROUND
MANILA UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PHILIPPINE MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION AT THE SOCIAL HALL, NURSES' HOME,
SAN LAZARO HOSPITAL, ON JUNE 8, 1945 AT
4 P. M.

Comrades:

Allow me to call you my comrades because all of us have suffered much from the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, and our hearts now beat in unison calling for justice and redress. Let us hope that in the not distant future, the Japanese people, who have already felt the might and determination of the fighting forces of America, will see the complete destruction of their island Empire, and the elimination of their military overlords responsible in carrying on this abominable war.

We are gathered here today for the purpose of renewing old friendships and making new ones, and to discuss among ourselves the problems affecting the medical profession in the Philippines during these trying times. You will agree with me that most, if

not all, of the practicing physicians here have lost their means of livelihood. Many of them, having lost their property and other belongings, are now living only on their small reserves. I want you to know that I realize their predicament and I shall only be too glad to extend to them such assistance as may be in my power to give. But positions in the Government service are limited in number and in remuneration, and naturally I am not well in a position to accommodate all of them in the Government service. I shall, however, be happy to help as many of them as I can to obtain positions where their training and experience may be needed.

A few days ago, upon the request of several medical private practitioners, I took up with the Civil Affairs Section of the USAFFE the necessity of releasing at an early date from the control of the PCAUS the private hospitals in the City of Manila so as to enable the private practitioners to bring their patients to these

hospitals. I was informed that the PCAUS would release these private hospitals on or about July 1st, subject, of course, to certain regulations which they will issue regarding the purchase of medical supplies and other necessities.

The United States Army is organizing a labor battalion to handle its many construction projects in the Philippines. Physicians will be needed to take care of the health of the members of these battalions and I am making arrangements for the employment of Filipino physicians who may wish to apply for positions in these Army projects.

Many young physicians have applied for commission in the Philippine Army Reserve to be called to active duty later, and I have invariably told them that their applications will be given careful consideration.

With all these opportunities for public service, many of our

needy fellow physicians will be able to obtain some means of livelihood which although not very remunerative could and should serve to help them stand on their own feet again.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the difficulties encountered by the Health Department with regard to the sanitation of the City of Manila and its environs. There is difficulty in securing a sufficient number of laborers to collect the garbage as quickly as is necessary. I feel that it is our duty as members of the medical profession, to assist the Bureau of Health, and especially the United States Army authorities who have been helping our Government in the sanitation of Manila. May I appeal to you to give them our undivided support and cooperation? In our talks to our neighbors and friends, we must impress upon them the importance of cleanliness and the necessity of proper handling and disposal of garbage. The United

States Army officials, in whose hands the sanitation of the City of Manila has been placed, have made available on the streets empty drums for the people to throw in garbage and refuse. However, I have observed in some places that people do not place their garbage into these empty drums. Instead they just dump them on the streets and around the drums, resulting thereby as convenient breeding places for flies and other vermin. Let us appeal to the people that they should observe the rules as regards proper disposal of waste. Let us teach our neighbors and friends how to provide and maintain an incinirator in the yard where garbage could be burned every day. If only every house owner would take the trouble of burning their garbage daily, the garbage disposal problem in the City would be very much simplified.

An incinirator can be easily built out of an empty drum by making little holes in the lower third section of the drum so as

to create a draft. The drum can either be placed on the ground or over some stones in a conveniently located place in the yard where the garbage may be burned. If the holes in this part of the drum are sufficiently large, there will be enough draft to keep it burning. This procedure will do away with the odor and the garbage will not become a breeding place for flies and other insects.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the United States Army officials who have done so much for the sanitation of the City of Manila. I would like to express also my thanks to Mr. Atienza, Administrative Officer of the City of Manila, and to Mr. Reyes, City Engineer, for their generous offer to cooperate with the Department of Health and Public Welfare in maintaining the City streets of Manila clean and tidy.

In closing, may I remind you that the medical profession can render valuable service to the country irrespective of whether its members are in or outside the government service. I urge you, therefore, to keep yourselves ever alive to the growing needs of our people, more specially those who have had the misfortune of contracting ill-health or impoverished physical condition. I am confident that you will do your very best to help alleviate their suffering. That ought to go a long way in assisting the Government which, although sparing no effort and employing all possible resources at its command to safeguard the health of the people, has to depend much on the help and cooperation of such men as you for attaining success in the various health projects it has set out to accomplish. Service rendered thus by you to your Government is service to the people -- to humanity. In the course of our doing what we can to serve ourselves and our families, I hope that we would not neglect also to find sufficient time to help those in need of our professional skill and assistance.

10